1:Sanders Z-5W (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

[P.36]

III

The Village Setting

621 Part of the story of Greek survival lies in the village form of organization.
361 To be sure, the city has exercised a tremendous sway over the thought and
[369] mood of the Greek people in the past and even more so today. But a peasant's tangible world has been his village. We see the village first of all as a place with a focal point, or square, from which emanate streets, lanes, or paths winding in adjustment to the local surface features. As a place, the village has increasing connections with the outside world, since new
[491] roads continue to replace donkey tracks which until recently led from the
[487] more isolated areas.

But the village is also a service center where the farm family can shop or get some local artisan to make or repair household or farm equipment. In the rural areas of Greece, as elsewhere, these village services do not extend to waste disposal, this being the responsibility of the individual family. Viewed from another point, the village is a collection of houses, yards, and gardens, which also deserve a brief description if one is to see the backdrop against which so much of the peasant's daily life occurs.

621 In the village the rural Greek has found a pattern of life which gives him
the many advantages of a close-knit community and at the same time allows
[476] him to farm his land, exchange work and implements with his relatives or
[438] neighbors, sell his crops, and care for his animals in a common pasture,
[233] frequently under the care of a common swineherd or shepherd. Agricultural

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Thessaly.

241 461 178 462 near Thebes in Central Greece, had this to say: "The coming of a tractor will 'rest a family.' They will have better yields due to more systematic treatment and better plowing. Before, people had to work ten hours a day while with a tractor they need to work from five to six hours at a maximum. The fact that they have to work less brings joy to the house, for a person who is rested has more of a mood for gaiety than one who is tired. The women certainly are hoped for they do not have to be in the fields and can occupy themselves more with housework, with clothes, and can have more time for amusement."

241 178 Elsewhere I asked, 'What difference does the machine make?' The director of the Larissa agricultural school answered this way:

> Twenty years ago this area around Larissa was in large *tsiflikia*, or estates, belonging to a very few families, which produced chiefly sheep. With the expropriation and redistribution of land there was a trend toward wheat, corn, alfalfa, so much so that even the slopes where the sheep once grazed are now cultivated.
>
> [407] Today Thessaly is the most mechanized area of Greece. In 1940 the plain around Larissa had 160 tractors; now the number is well over 1300. [Greece in 1952 had 5400 tractors and in 1956 over 12,000 compared with 1700 in 1938.][9]
>
> [727] [492] [423] [454] The war, the occupation, and the guerrilla conflict brought an equality in that everyone lost their animals. Then, those who were able to buy tractors — chiefly those who had had the animals before the war — gained an economic advantage. Before mechanization the peasant used to toil and sweat over his land and get very little from it; now with mechanization people become more attached to the land since they see that they can make a profit from it. Those who before would have sold now hold on to it. The merchants in town complain that there is a crisis, but there is none really, for the peasant is putting all of his spare money into fields and more equipment. Now he is farming in a scientific way.

At this point his wife who had been sitting in the living room with us, began to speak. She owned some land which she had not visited for three years because of illness. When she did visit the peasants who worked this land for her, she found that they were telling her all kinds of things that she needed to do — to use fertilizer, which they had formerly thought unnecessary, and machinery, with which they had been unacquainted before. She attributed much of the recent adoption of machinery to the great movement of people during the war.

[476] [461] Her husband then pointed out that today there was a greater and finer spirit of competition among the farmers than formerly, for they try to see who can get a greater yield. Mechanization leaves them more time for education and learning about new practices. It used to take a whole day for a peasant to plow less than an acre with two horses but now he can do ten

1:Sanders Z-5,1 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Vlachs EH15

G 233 [439] Although before the war Greece had over 8 million sheep and almost 4.5 million goats, these were still insufficient to meet local needs, and additional animals had to be imported each year. The war brought a reduction of about 2 million sheep and over a million goats, but by 1954 the numbers had risen to more than the prewar figures, and by 1957 sheep were estimated at 9.3 million and goats at 4.9 million.[3] From 1922 to 1937, with the resettlement of the 1.5 million refugees from Asia Minor, the pasture area in Greece decreased but the number of sheep rose from 6 million to well over 8 million. It takes little stretch of the imagination to see what this has meant in terms of overpasturing and in accentuating the competition for grazing land.

G [167]

The chief concentrations of sheep and goats are found in Thessaly and through the western part of the country (Epirus, Roumele, and the Peloponnesos). Even in Attica, according to P. J. Iliopoulos, a region where numbers are not so dense, the small livestock make the best adaptation to the natural conditions; they provide the peasants with some income to offset farms that are too small or harvests that are insufficient; and they require less capital investment than do large cattle.[4]

G [434]

V G 233 221 [427] There are three different systems of sheep management in Greece.[5] The first is that used by the so-called Vlachs, an interesting nomadic group to be discussed in detail later on. This group of grazers controls about 15 percent of the sheep. They are landless and rent grazing land from private landholders, the church, or the state. It is customary for them to graze their herds in the plains during the rainy winter months, while the lowland pastures are lush, and then drive their flocks into the mountains as spring and summer advance.

The second type of management is that practiced by the village ranchers, who control about 70 percent of the small animals. They own land in the plains, where they singly or cooperatively graze their flocks in the winter; they send them to the mountains in summer, as do the Vlachs. In some instances, farmers in this group will arrange with a Vlach to include their animals in his flock during the summer grazing in the mountains.

G 233 [476] The third type is connected with settled agriculture. Village farmers control the remaining 15 percent of the sheep and goats and keep them on the plains at all times. Usually, the animals of these farmers are combined under the care of Greek shepherds, whose responsibility is to prevent the animals from damaging the crops by restricting their grazing to the rougher foothills or the fallow or idle areas in the plains.

The best way, however, to describe the changing life of the shepherd is not to talk about sheep and goats, but to look him up wherever he is and try to view the world through his eyes. We will do this by visiting him in the Peloponnesos and in Epirus, by which time facts and figures on sheep and goats should have much more meaning.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

Transhumance in the Peloponnesos

We were on our way to Tripolis, the chief interior city of the Peloponnesos. Earlier we had crossed the Corinth Canal, had stopped for gas at Corinth, and gone on to Argos, perhaps the most ancient city of Greece. Oranges were ripe on the trees in the square around the cathedral, where buses pulled up to let their through passengers have a bite to eat. Turkeys and chickens tied by the leg to the top of the bus gobbled and squawked intermittently, but long ago had ceased to struggle for freedom. Leaving Argos, we had begun the long winding climb that eventually brought us to a mountain-top view of the blue Gulf of Argos and of the small port city of Nauplion across the way beneath a fortress-topped summit. As always in Greece, the shifting light gave a magic cast to the hills whose eroded sides revealed a rainbow of color, to the brown cultivated fields below, and to the brilliant iridescent water. Such landscapes, ethereal in quality, are the paths into another world, where the legendary universe of Homer seems to have flowed into the pastoral existence of Greek shepherd families today. Suddenly, that life teemed about us.

The sheep were rounding the same curve as we were, but in the opposite direction — hundreds of them pushing and shoving and terrified at the sight of a noisy, shiny automobile. We quickly pulled to the side and parked. The shepherds whistled and called, brandishing their long crooks until they finally got the huge flock of sheep and goats past us. Having encountered and met this emergency, the shepherds were ready for a cigarette and a short chat. They were from the village of Valtetsi, a few miles beyond Tripolis, up in the mountains, and were headed with their flocks and families for Kranidi, approximately twenty-five miles below Nauplion. We learned that they were following the practice geographers call *transhumance*,[5] or the moving of the herds, as the seasons change, from a summer to a winter pasture, particularly from mountain to lowland grazing. These were not nomads in an endless round of movement on schedule from one good grassland to another. These people from Valtetsi had left their village of solid stone houses, where they spend approximately half of the year, for a definite location along a coastal plain where they were to spend the other half of the year.[6]

The shepherds to whom we talked represented five families traveling together. Each family had from one hundred to one hundred fifty sheep, its major source of sustenance and income; women and children accompanied the men and animals as a whole family. The trip from Valtetsi to Kranidi took eight days of slow travel. On this trek and at its lowland site each family managed its own affairs, with the father in charge.[7] There was no cooperative arrangement of a chief shepherd which I was to find later on in a journey to Northern Greece — simply a movement of parents and

1:Sanders Z-5μ (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos
[Shepherds]

233 children, pots and pans, donkeys, and a few articles of clothing left them
221 after destruction of their village by the Communist guerrillas several years
[476] earlier.

A later April day found us again in Tripolis. On the road we had once more been encountering flocks from Valtetsi, but this time they were headed
123 up toward home. Fortunately, Stephanos Agriopoulos, our favorite waiter
124 in the Reed Restaurant, had relatives in Valtetsi and was eager to take us there. We left the main highway at the new tuberculosis hospital, turning
[743] toward the mountains on our right. The road was barely passable, evidently
[491] the mere widening of a sheep track winding in and out but always up, along the edges of dry, bone dry, ravines. Now and then one of us had to get out to shove a rock from the road. En route Stephanos told us much about the people and the hard economic struggle they were facing. The road became less rocky as we neared the village. There were small fields, brilliant green,
[361] with trees along the edges. The trees stood tall around the school and church, the center of the village, where their spring freshness and sturdiness cast a sort of tender protection over the ruined stone houses that were Valtetsi. It was only after we let the people unburden themselves of their more immediate troubles, such as rebuilding their houses, that we could turn to a description of their customary semiannual migration with their flocks.

727 Valtetsi, with its one hundred eighty families, had not suffered under
669 the German occupation as had so many other Greek villages. Completely
[361] off any reasonable facsimile of a road, it was not visited by the invaders; but for this very reason it was frequented by the Communist guerrillas in the 1940s as they struggled for control of Greece. The Communist leaders repeatedly tried to persuade the people to join their side, but the Valtetsi residents refused. In anger at this refusal and with the words, "if you are not for us, you are against us," the Communists descended upon the village one day and killed about one hundred people, mostly men. They burned most of the houses and took the women and children off with them. Each man to whom we talked had some personal tragedy to relate and could show us the name of some close relative or friend on the marble monument by the church erected in honor of these victims of the Communist
727 guerrillas. As a constant reminder of that terrible day, the houses still
362 stood in ruins — six years later. We went from house to house and found that through lack of lumber the second stories had not been built back, nor had there been tile available for the roofs. Many of the families were holed in, as it were, on the first floor, pretty much exposed to the elements during the six months of their sojourn "at home." Yet the people were friendly, glad to see us. Their mobile faces were alive. They smiled easily, were full of curiosity, and bubbled with wit. The state of dilapidation was
[123] even more noticeable when the village secretary and president, in order to give us a drink of ouzo "for the road," had to ferret out a bottle and a few

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X

Mutual Aid and Cooperatives in Rural Greece

The Greek village provides many evidences of mutual aid, although the Greeks are not renowned for their cooperative tendencies. Indeed, those commenting on Greek national character usually state that the Greeks cooperate only in a crisis. If there is no crisis at hand, they have to make one in order to get the job done. This view is partially correct, since some examples of mutual aid respond directly to a sense of urgency, while others follow traditional patterns at a leisurely pace. For instance, a group of potato diggers near Neochori were brought together to meet a sudden need.

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A Potato-digging Group near Thebes

It was March 28, 1953. We had turned off the main highway between Thebes and Athens and were headed eastward along a secondary road in search of some villagers whose relatives in California had insisted that we carry their greetings in person. Before we had found the right village, we noticed more than forty people busily harvesting potatoes in a nearby field. We stopped the car, walked into the field, and were greeted by Yannes P. Katseles, the owner, who lives in Neochori, the village just up the way. The men were digging the potatoes; the women were picking them up and cleaning them; and a commission merchant standing on his truck was

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[123]
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1:Sanders Z-5#1 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

[Potato-digging near Thebes]

244 476 [462] directing his four helpers in sorting and sacking them. We were much less interested in what happened to the potatoes than in the means whereby forty people were gathered together at one time to help with the task at hand. We asked Yannes a number of questions:

"What do you call this kind of group?"

"We speak of it as *daneike ergasia* [borrowed work]. I received word that the commission merchant from Thebes would buy my potatoes if I had them ready by tonight. I have about an acre which I had not yet harvested, but this was too much to handle with just my immediate family. So I had to get others to help me. Last night my wife went around to the women and said, 'Tomorrow I'm going to pull potatoes. Will you come and help me?' I asked some of my relatives who live near me and a few close friends."

"What do you have to pay these people?"

"Usually we repay the others by working for them when they need help. One of us — my wife, daughter, or myself — will go help them with their potatoes when they have to harvest them. We keep a pretty good record of [465] what we owe to others and what they owe to us. Five or six of the men working here do not have any potato fields so I agreed to pay them wages. They are particularly good at helping the commission merchant sort and sack the potatoes."

244 466 476 [123] [539] [126] Such a crowd gathered around us while we asked these questions that we saw we were interrupting proceedings. So we strolled around to see how the men did the digging and learned that they worked under the close supervision of the owner. This fact reminded me of the Greek proverb, "The owner's eye is manure to the field." In fact, as the men dug, they moved in a long row across the field with the result that any laggard would soon be noticeably behind the rest. The villagers joked a great deal as we took pictures and asked about the length of the work day. The workers had come to the field about eight in the morning and would remain until the job was done, with the "estimated time of departure" set by the owner at about four or five o'clock.

[262] [785] The highlight of a day spent in such a work group is the food that is served to the workers about ten o'clock. Since the people were supposedly observing the Lenten fast, Yannes served a bean stew, candylike halvas, olives, fish, and wine. If they had not been fasting, they might have had cheese and eggs. Yannes insisted that they would only on rare occasions serve meat since they do not even eat that at home more than twice a month. But the workers, when asked about the food, said that it had been good and plentiful. "In fact," one man volunteered, "when Yannes invites us, we all say that we'll eat well today." Further inquiry showed that nobody ever turned down an invitation to a work group simply because he expected the food to be poor, but he would do so on other grounds, such as

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

being busily involved in some work project of his own. At two o'clock Yannes planned to serve olives, onions, and bread with plenty of red resinated wine.

We could not stay much longer with the potato diggers, for we still had to carry our greetings to the village farther on. But a few days later I did return to Neochori and went to Yannes' home to find out who had been invited and why. In some ways this visit proved even more interesting than the sojourn in the potato field. The men were all away from the house; so Yannes' wife invited us into the square room which served as the center of family life. We sat around a table and began to list the twenty-five men and the eighteen women who had been a part of the mutual-aid group. Soon we saw neighboring women peering at us through the open window; then they moved on around to the door where they could hear better what we were talking about. News of our arrival must have spread like magic, for before we completed our list the room was full of women — some sitting on the beds along the wall, but several standing in order to observe more minutely everything that was going on. It was out of the question to interview the wife confidentially about why she invited some women and not others. As a matter of fact, two or three women had already taken it upon themselves to answer every question put to Yannes' wife, so that she was simply nodding in assent to what they said.

In no time at all, with the help of the most vocal members of the group, we had listed the relationship of each potato worker to Yannes and his wife. A later count of this information showed that, after we excluded Yannes, the commission merchant, and his one helper from outside, only six of the twenty-two remaining men were unrelated to Yannes. Each of these six persons was a neighbor. Of the seventeen women invited (excluding Yannes' wife), all but four were related to Yannes, but four were neighbors. Thus it was evident that family considerations and neighboring played a significant part, even to the point that some relatives who were not good workers were invited "because they were relatives." In other words, family values rather than economic values, such as efficiency, came into play.

We had noted that many of the women in the potato field were in their late teens or early twenties and found that they were preferred to the middle-aged women who are, of course, not excluded. Perhaps the younger ones have stronger backs and have no grounds for refusing if their father or husband tells them to go and help. Although a man is preferred for this kind of work, there would be no ill feeling if Yannes repaid some man who helped him by sending one of the women in his household. "We don't keep such close count that such a substitution bothers us" was the way one woman reacted.

In the course of our crowded group interview we learned that women

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

244 476 578 issuing invitations usually avoid other women with whom they have had a recent quarrel, although they do not hesitate to invite two women on good terms with the hostess but not on good terms with each other. These women can usually stay far enough apart in such a large group that they do not have to associate with each other or air their differences. Men are said to be less inclined to let previous disagreements affect their invitations, even inviting those with whom they may have sharp differences. Their main concern is to get the job done. Just the same, they rely chiefly upon relatives and neighbors. The women in Yannes' living room all agreed that there was no one in the village who had the reputation for not paying back the work that others had contributed, which shows the seriousness with which this obligation is assumed and discharged.

124 But no interview in a Greek village is a one-sided affair. The visitor has to answer questions if he has asked them. Never have I heard questions fly quicker and faster than on this visit to Neochori when the women sensed that I had finished my inquiry about potato diggers. My interpreter was quizzed about her life in Athens, where she got her clothes, how she had learned to drive a car, and about members of her family. I was asked about my income in America, what kind of kitchen my wife had, and about many details which she could have answered much better than I if she had been able to accompany us up from Athens on that particular afternoon. This [181] occasion showed that when the Greek villagers began to express themselves on their home ground, in a familiar setting, they stood out as inquisitive, interesting personalities who shared many of the same concerns as fellow human beings in other countries despite their noticeable differences of dress, speech, and other cultural manifestations.

000 In driving back to Athens we had to pass the same potato field which had been the cause of this excursion. I thought at the time that a study, at a later date, of changes in the mutual-aid groups would tell much about changes in Greek life in general. Will mechanization eliminate the necessity of group harvesting? Will economic considerations so rule a later day that Yannes will invite only efficient workers from throughout the village, or will he continue to use relatives and neighbors because of his close social bonds with them?

Traditional Patterns of Mutual Aid

476 539 Throughout rural Greece one finds many examples of mutual aid. Even proverbs attest to the value of cooperation: "bean by bean the bag is filled"; "many streams make up the river"; "many stones knock down the walnut." Union in strength is stressed as well: "where there are many, God's blessing"; "where there are many, many riches"; "the many are the ones who will take Constantinople."

It is understood, too, that each party will live up to his end of the bar-

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

gain, for the proverbs say: "agreement is law"; "one ties the oxen by the horns, the man by his word." But the rugged individualists can also quote proverbs to show the dangers of depending upon others: "better a threshing floor small but your own"; "the donkey owned in common is eaten by the dogs"; "the wolf has a thick neck because he has to work alone."

Perhaps the simplest form of mutual aid is found in the case of two farmers, each of whom possesses but a single animal. They take turns using both animals to pull a plow or to do some other task where a team is needed. These partners are often called *smichtes* or *sebroi*. The Yannes described in an earlier chapter, who was disconsolately waiting for his partner to finish with his horse so that he could take the team to his own fields, was engaged in this kind of mutual aid. In Epirus, for instance, those with a single animal are called *monovodoi* (or single-oxen farmers), and each tries to join up with someone else in order to have a team available when needed. Similarly, someone with a donkey or two lends his animals to another farmer who needs to haul his cereal or hay from the fields or to market, in the expectation that he will have the use of the borrower's animals when in similar need.

Somewhat more complex in detail but similar in type are the arrangements that shepherds make concerning the care of their flocks and the distribution of the produce, which was mentioned earlier in the description of the changing life of the shepherd.

Mutual aid also extends to the exchange of agricultural labor, as in the case of the potato diggers. It can also occur between two families who throughout the work season combine their labor resources, culminating in tremendous output at harvest time. Or labor can be repaid by some other kind of service, as was the case in Malakassa (Attica), where the president of the commune went to the coffeehouse and said that he needed some help in harvesting a crop. Sixteen men from the coffeehouse went along to aid. When we asked the coffeehouse proprietor what these men would receive in return we were told, "The president has a cart and will help each of these men haul in stuff from their fields when they need him."

But there are times when much help is needed for some special event which does not recur frequently in the life of an individual family. Here the traditional "working bee" is assembled. For example, a family decides to plant a new vineyard or to put up some kind of a building. It calls upon its neighbors and relatives for help, feeds them well, and eventually pays back the labor provided when called upon by those who contributed. We found mutual-aid groups also busy making cheese for their own use and for sale or digging clay which they worked into home-made brick.

Women, however, seem to be more fully involved in a wide variety of mutual-aid arrangements. They may help each other with certain household chores — carding wool, baking bread, carrying fuel (*pournari*

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

476 573 branches) from the hillsides to the house. But the most frequently described and the most romantic arrangements are the *nychteria,* or the groups of women who work together in the evening:

> In the nychteria women help each other finish lighter types of work such as carding, the breaking and cleaning of almonds, cornhusking, kneading of ring biscuits, and the like. In these nocturnal pursuits in certain places customs are strict and men are strictly forbidden to participate. Because this type of work is housework and is carried out in the late hours of the day, it usually takes the form of a social gathering. Drinks and roasted chickpeas are offered, jokes are told, games are played, stories and anecdotes are told, and there is singing and dancing.[1]

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372 Once in a while this dancing may last until dawn. In the summertime, especially, the women gather in the village lanes and spin by the light of the moon or a torch of resinous wood.

476 589 When a woman, whose husband is dead or off in the army, needs help which no kinship group can provide, she will go to the head of some other family and say: "My son has gone into the army. I have only daughters. If you will help me in man's work my daughters will help you." They then become *kollegoi* (colleagues or partners) and carry out the agreed-upon obligations.

These examples are not intended to cover the wide range of mutual-aid activities, but they serve to highlight their main features. Fishermen have numerous arrangements for helping one another; farmers may rent a field and work it jointly, or even own olive or nut trees in common. In general, these mutual-aid arrangements are viewed as quite different from landlord-tenant contracts which occurred in many forms before the land redistribution in the 1920s. Those tied together in mutual-aid agreements think of themselves as coequal and not as superior and subordinate partners. Nor do these mutual-aid traditions ordinarily apply to cases where money alone is given as full payment for services received. Instead, they make it possible for villagers to meet many of their important needs without having to pay money for services rendered. The mutual-aid practices discussed here differ also from what might be called philanthropy or deeds done for "the good of the soul" which will be looked at more closely in connection with the villager's religion.

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157 Beyond any question, there is a strong strain of cooperation even among the individualistic Greeks. Although somewhat overidealized, the following comment by T. K. Papaspyropoulos about his Peloponnesian village portrays the essence of mutual aid there:

> When somebody gets sick everybody goes to visit him and look after him. When a young girl gets married all the village goes and helps. When they sow, plow, winnow, or do any other village tasks one person helps the other.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

Even when death is there, there is help. Who can bury the dead by himself? The village all cry together, they all suffer together, and the whole village buries him. He too is not far away from them. His soul roams around them and, as they say themselves, he watches them.[2]

The Agricultural Cooperative Movement in Greece

One could logically argue that a people with as many kinds of mutual aid as the Greek villagers should take readily to the cooperative organization designed to assist cooperators, through organized efforts, to achieve goals which they could not hope to satisfy individually. But the transition from informal mutual aid to an organized cooperative proves much more difficult than one would at first imagine. In the first place, since the village mutual-aid patterns are a "here and now" undertaking, those participating can see the immediate results of their labor and can hold the person helped accountable to return assistance to them when needed. The formal cooperative organizations, on the other hand, have to set goals which are removed both in time and place from the average peasant. Not only are the centers of financial control and the markets distant, but the member has to wait for benefits to accrue in the case of a marketing cooperative. In a credit cooperative, the loan received is more tangible, but its attainment has probably seemed to the peasant a long, laborious procedure.

The transition from village mutual aid to the formal cooperative organization is difficult, in the second place, because the *formal* organization itself is an urban rather than a village development. To participate in and guide an organization takes as much "know-how" as repairing a tractor or managing a flock. But it is a different kind of skill from any which the peasant has been trained to use, and he is therefore either ill at ease or grossly inefficient when he tries to work with such a new social mechanism. Parliamentary procedure, the keeping of books and membership lists, and the preparation of reports go on around him all of the time, but he is seldom called upon to participate in such activity. This means that, as a member, he is apt to be passive and apathetic; he is also apt not to understand much of what is done in the cooperative organization and is therefore chronically critical of management, the government, and perhaps the whole idea of formal cooperatives in general. Once he has learned to deal with the social mechanism of the organization, he is much more self-assured and agreeable, but getting to this point takes a great deal of time for most villagers.

But perhaps a third difficulty in the transition from local mutual aid to membership in the cooperative society is most crucial. Basically the mutual-aid groups consist of family members and neighbors; only occasionally do they even call upon others in the village. The cooperative association makes an immediate leap beyond family and neighborhood to encompass men from the whole village — men who know each other but who have not

1:Sanders Z-5 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

474 476 178 been accustomed to working together. Even more, the cooperative becomes closely identified with the central government, which immediately introduces not only nonfamilial but even nonlocal considerations. This is a psychological gap which many peasants cannot quickly cross. Promoters of cooperatives from outside may see in them a strong support of family and village values; but the peasant sees in them the impersonality of the political authority, the introduction of money rather than exchange of labor as the unit of measurement, and, at times, even questions the motives of those "who are running around trying to get us to join something we don't know anything about." Throughout Greece I found villages at all degrees of opposition or readiness for cooperatives, but where there was resistance these three difficulties were present along with a dozen other reasons the people gave to explain why they did not want to join.

474 438 The cooperative movement, like so much in Greece, has an interesting past. One important landmark noted by students of cooperatives in Greece was the rise of Ambelakia, a city on the Peneios River in Northern Greece, which became such an important manufacturing center of cotton and silk goods in the seventeenth century that it had trade connections throughout Europe. Its dyed thread was particularly well known then, although its wine is its only product renowned today. Ambelakia rose to economic greatness because of the well-run association which administered the community's affairs. Although this may have been more in the tradition of the guild than a modern cooperative, it nevertheless showed what a single community could do if it organized its efforts in a systematic fashion.[8] The association of Ambelakia, as well as the modern cooperative movement, is thought by some to have its roots deep in the traditions of local self-government, as the later discussion of this topic will show. Not only would one community organize itself as a viable political and economic unit, but several communities in an area would band together to deal with the Turkish masters. But, significant as these unions were, they were quite different in scope and intent from the agricultural-cooperative movement in Greece today which goes back to 1900. At that time a schoolteacher in the village of Almyros in Thessaly, aroused over the fact that local usurers were charging peasants interest rates as high as 100 percent, organized a local credit or loan society which he called a mutual treasury. This type of organization spread to many communities throughout the country.

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474 656 In 1915 a new law provided for the establishment of cooperatives, with at least seven persons required to form a society. Such a cooperative could be of unlimited liability, with each member having one vote, or it could be of limited liability, with those having more shares being allowed up to five votes but no more. The Cooperative Act provided certain privileges: exemption from import duties on agricultural implements and machinery, seeds, spray materials, and other essential agricultural materials for the

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Kalivi, Attica

474 the executive committee five, and the supervising board three. This cooperative helps bring in fodder, sell milk, arrange loans. If a member has taken a loan, he must give milk to the cooperative as payment on the loan. In some types of loan the shepherd can be responsible directly to the Agricultural Bank. There are three other cooperatives of lesser importance. Everybody belongs to the vineyard cooperative, for all grow grapes, but this cooperative has not been very active of late due to a number of economic changes taking place in the village. Fifteen people belong to an apiary cooperative; and fifteen others belong to a poultry cooperative, since this is a growing source of income for the local people.

[233] [652] [245] [231] [235] [434]

These reactions to cooperatives document some of the general observations made earlier about the movement. There is a tendency for the foreigner to side with those peasants who are most critical of the way cooperatives are now being run, but any such critic must be prepared to explain how one can expect much local control unless the local villagers put up some of the working capital, as did the villagers of Kalivi with their pasture land. For the most part, members of the Greek cooperatives make no contributions, buy no shares, pay only nominal membership fees, for the reason that they do not have sufficient economic margin. Those officials who lend public funds have to concentrate on control and collection, since it is an accepted practice in Greece, as in many parts of the world, for the farmer to borrow as much as he can and pay back as little as he can. The educational task, then, is the difficult one of teaching the necessity of honoring one's contracts to the cooperative as truly as the peasant honors his informal agreements to pay back labor in a traditional mutual-aid activity. It also calls for the community-wide recognition that peasants who are defaulting on their payments are hurting fellow members in the cooperative and should in time be made to feel the censure of those who are keeping agreements. But, most important of all, the cooperatives could be interpreted as social mechanisms through which the peasants can do more than merely borrow money or get fertilizer on credit — as avenues through which they can effectively increase their general economic well-being.

[471]

● 476 In the final analysis, however, mutual aid in a Greek village consists of more than the informal patterns, such as the potato-digging group of Neochori; it is more than the cooperative organizations in all of their variations. It also includes the philanthropic assistance, to be discussed in connection with religion, and the "voluntary labor" required of the community members by their community council, an interesing form of mutual effort to be discussed under local government.

1:Sanders Z-5 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

representative of the International Red Cross, who arranged with the organizational officials in Athens for an immediate distribution of rice, sugar, and molasses (for children). Momentarily, the representative also secured money for bread, telephoning from Athens to the commandant to buy the bread locally. The Red Cross representative had expected the commandant to buy about eight hundred one-oka loaves of bread, but he had different ideas: "Why not give the people flour and cut down the expense of the salt, water, and manipulation that goes into the baked bread?" So he bought nine hundred and eighty okas of flour and persuaded the flour mills at Volos to contribute another two tons. He also handled the problem of transportation with originality. Since these eight villages are remote, the trucking costs to them are high. The commandant, suggesting that the distribution be at four points, appealed to the local transportation cooperatives to supply the trucks after the Union of Trucks had voted to help. Then the drivers agreed to donate a day's free labor, with the "day" totaling sixteen hours for many of them before the distribution was completed and the trucks were safely back in Volos.

But the role of the village notables should not be minimized. Although the commandant had made a trip through the district to look personally into the condition of many families, he depended upon the president, the priest, the teacher, and the gendarme to prepare the list of the needy in each village. The role of the president came to the fore at the distribution points, to which he brought some men and pack animals. The commandant explained in great detail to each president the basis on which the distribution was being made, who had made the contributions, and what families were to receive how much. The supplies for each village, when weighed out from the trucks, were turned over to the community president. He then supervised the loading of the pack animals and headed the animal train back toward his village. Once arrived, he was to see that the distribution was carried out according to instructions.

Such an experience leaves many impressions: the deep personal interest which the commandant of gendarmerie showed in the welfare of the people in his area; the dignity of the village presidents who asked very intelligent questions to be sure that they properly understood the instructions about distribution; the tattered clothing worn by these quiet, almost impassive villagers. And here, as always in Greece, one sensed deeply the beauty of the natural surroundings: the mountains where patches of snow still lingered, the dark glades through which the road sometimes wound, the occasional olive groves and chestnut forests, with lively pedestrian traffic ready to greet one every few hundred yards. Down on the plain, on a sunny afternoon, the meadows were full of a profusion of wild flowers so delicate in color and stamina that they die soon after they are plucked or after the hot sun of late April and May beats down on the unprotected plain. On

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

the cities in the spirit of *noblesse oblige*. Under the circumstances in Greece today, nothing could seem more natural to the local people than to have the church, in the person of a gifted bishop, work out arrangements to meet their pressing welfare needs. How such a complicated network of institutions would be kept going should the energetic bishop not be around was a matter that gave one pause; but one must live in the present when human lives are at stake, and that is what the bishop was doing. He was following a well-established practice in making the church the channel for helping others.

The kind of help called *psychiko* is done for the soul, for the forgiveness of the souls of one's dead loved ones; it is customarily given in the form of helping the poor members of the community — the sick, the widows, and the orphans — out of purely Christian feeling. When some family is suffering misfortune in a village, the priest announces the fact in church and invites those who can help to do so. This is a form of aid in which those helping are not usually repaid, which makes it differ from the kinds of mutual aid discussed in an earlier chapter. In Koroni, in the western Peloponnesos, for instance, if a widow needs a crop harvested or threshed, grapes picked, or some field work done, the priest will announce that on such and such a day this widow has *xelassi*, as this arrangement is called, and those who wish can go to help. She feeds them, but they derive a spiritual rather than a material benefit from the work they contribute.

Or in Epirus, some important member of the community, not the priest, may send out the town crier or field guard to call from some height: "Listen, village, tomorrow we will carry from the mountain some wood for the home of Kyra Tassena, the widow of Tasso. All those who have mules must send them and those who haven't got any must come to help. Nobody must be missing."[13] He will then close with the proverb, *tona cheiri nivi talo kai ta dio to prosopo* (the one hand washes the other, and both of them the face).

Sundays and holidays, days on which peasants are not supposed to work in their own fields, are quite suitable for psychiko, or work done for the good of one's soul. D. A. Petropoulos, on whose article much of this discussion of psychiko is based, maintains that what characteristically distinguishes Christian philanthropy from ancient Greek philanthropy is that the first connects religion with the salvation of the soul, while in the ancient days help was given out of a purely logical understanding in order to have a normal social and communal system.[14]

The transition from this method of dealing with human need to the professional approach of contemporary social work is quite a leap. What progress is being made in training social workers in Greece is through the Young Women's Christian Association (but this again is a semireligious attachment), or through the Queen's Fund, providing scholarships at Pierce College.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

178 241 594 [435] Closely related to a family head's economic predicament is the demand for, and therefore the price of, the cash crops that he grows. The tobacco farmer of Northern Greece, the peasant growing olives on Mount Pelion near Thessaly, the apple grower in western Macedonia around Phlorina, and the producer of currents in the northern Peloponnesos are familiar with the ups and downs of the world markets. When he shifts from wheat to cotton or rice, the farmer makes more than an economic decision; he also determines much about family relationships in his home. Growing wheat calls for a very different participation of the woman than does the cultivation of rice in irrigated fields. In the latter case, the farmer also has to submit himself [312] to the organizational control that the use of irrigated water necessitates, being ready to divert the stream into his own fields when his neighbor has [476] used the allotted time for watering his fields. With his neighbors, too, he must cooperate to keep drainage ditches clear, unless this can be turned over to some governmental agency. Or, if a family shifts from sheep rais- [233] ing to settled farming, the fate of the children is apt to be different. In caring [857] for sheep the children are an important economic asset, which keeps them away from the house for several hours during the day and even away from school for two or three years.

178 626 183 Social change of the drifting, unplanned sort can be observed among the young people as well. On a Sunday afternoon a young man recently returned from the army may go up to a young woman in the promenade on the village square and ask if he can walk with her. This may be the first time that any young man has made this maneuver in this village. The other young people watch with almost unbelieving eyes and, if they see that no serious social consequences are visited upon the innovator, may eventually themselves get around to pairing off. Village opinion, too, may be in for a start when a father and his grown son, perhaps because they want to continue the discussion of some economic transaction in which they are involved, go to sit together in a coffeehouse where it has never been customary before for sons to sit with their fathers. Indeed, as pointed out earlier, the practice may be that sons are not even to enter the coffeehouse where the fathers go. Now and then, particularly in the past, innovators of this sort have experienced unpleasant social pressures of many kinds, which may even have stopped them from trying to change local customs. Today, there is such social ferment, such a mixing of traditional and modern roles, that much more individual variability is permitted.

178 369 602 Several times I asked Greek friends who were familiar with village life whether the villager was more apt to imitate what he saw in Athens or what he saw in a provincial town. In other words, I wondered if the changes emanating from the city were mediated by the townspeople who lived nearer the villager and in whose community the villager felt more at home. These

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steel plow, or he can hire a tractor to do the job. The hiring of the tractor includes fuel and the services of a tractor operator.

Two farmers in Vasilika own tractors—one made the purchase in 1952 (a British Ferguson), the other in 1956 (a British Fordson). They were bought on the installment plan with credit extended by the Agricultural Bank of Greece. The tractor operators are a son and a nephew, respectively, of each of the owners. Both of the farmers who purchased tractors have landholdings which are large for the region, perhaps as many as sixty *stremata* but divided into tracts of some ten to twenty *stremata* each. Even if the land were not divided into such small parcels, there would not be enough return on so little land for economically sound use of a tractor. Both the bank management and the farmers are well aware of this, so that credit for the purchase of the machinery is given with the understanding that the owner will use the tractor as a capital investment and earn income from it by renting it out.

Farmers decide to hire or not to hire a tractor for the fall plowing on the basis of practical considerations of the moment. If weather conditions have been normal in the late summer and early fall, a farmer will be more likely to proceed with his horse-drawn plowing. If, however, early rains have delayed the cotton picking and all hands are needed in the cotton fields when the wheat fields should be plowed, a farmer may hire a tractor to be sure that the job gets done before the winter rains. Most of the farmers maintain a horse to use as a pack animal, in any case, so that it is obviously cheaper to plow with the horse. For increased efficiency, two farmers sometimes contribute one horse apiece, so that the team of horses working on each of their fields in turn will get the work done faster and at no additional cost. For wheat, the farmers say, the deeper plowing of the tractor is not important, so whenever possible they work with the animals. For cotton, as we shall see later, they believe tractor plowing increases the yield. Generally speaking, as one might expect, the farmers with fewer land resources tend to make less use of the tractors than those who can expect a good cash income from their fields and so can afford the outlay for the hire of a tractor.

After the broadcast sowing of the wheat (which is done on each *strema* immediately after it has been plowed) and the dragging of the fields, what remains is some light hoeing to be done in February and March, the spreading by hand of some chemical fertilizer at about the same time, and when the weather warms up, the spraying of a chemical weed killer by means of a hand-operated pressure pump. A farmer who does not own such a pump borrows one from a neighbor, and no charge is made for its use.

Harvesting of the wheat crop is done almost entirely by machine in Vasilika. Reaper and thresher combines, with their operators, make the rounds of the Boeotian plains villages at harvest time in June. The threshed wheat is weighed out in the fields and the machine operators are paid promptly with twelve percent of the crop. Chaff and straw left in the fields are collected by the household and made into small packages to be used for bedding down the animals. Each farmer may set aside four or five *stremata* of his wheat field to be reaped by hand with a standard sickle. He then hires a thresher with operator

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first group of holdings. Once again, no brother knows which parcel of land will become his until after the drawing of the lots. Each man, therefore, has a strong incentive to see to it that the partition of the land holdings is as equitable as possible. If the mother of the men is still living, the brothers set apart several *stremata* of land which will become part of the share of whatever brother she elects to live with. This represents her dower right. Still other small parcels of land, on the order of five to ten *stremata,* are assigned outright to the brothers who are no longer farmers and do not live in the village. The token land is kept in their names, "so that they may remember their father," as one villager puts it. The conferees next turn their attention to their animal holdings and once again group these into parcels of equal value. Farm equipment and the outbuildings are treated in the same way.

Once the shares for each kind of property are decided upon, an enumeration of each share for each type of holding is written on a piece of paper and rolled up to resemble a cigarette. At that point, the women and children are called in and the time for drawing the lots has arrived. A neighbor or one of the children (never any of the adults in the family) is invited to draw the lots, first for the land, then for the farm animals, then for the equipment and outbuildings,and then for the houses. The moment is a tense one, for in spite of all efforts to equalize the shares some will be considered more desirable than others. The old house, for example, is not desired as much as one of the new houses, and the family that draws it may be disappointed. After the lots are drawn, the mother decides where she will stay. In one recent instance, she stayed with the brother who won the old house (he was not the eldest) because she felt more comfortable there. In another, the mother went with her younger son who had drawn a new house because his child was still small and her services as a babytender were needed.

When the whole procedure is completed, the personal effects of each brother and his wife and children are moved to the appropriate house, the furniture is distributed, and that night, for the first time, each family sleeps alone in its own establishment.

Descriptions given of the drawing of lots always convey the strong emotional involvement the participants have in the proceedings. The occasion heralds a change in the routines of life and in each family's attitude toward his property. The women tell of their tears and wails as they bid each other farewell before leaving to spend their first night in separate houses. They also describe their sensations of loneliness and strangeness under the new circumstances. The fact that the houses are almost always close together because they must be built on family-owned house sites in the village seems not to lessen the sense of dispersion as far as the women are concerned. The brothers continue as neighbors. They cooperate in agricultural activities much as unrelated neighbors in the village do: they borrow plows, draught animals, and other equipment from whoever owns it. In the meantime, the sisters-in-law may call on each other for help in the housework, they draw water from the same well, and their children visit freely in each other's houses. In other words, face-to-face associations con-

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relatives who are, of course, automatically acquired by birth. Certainly this is a real distinction between the affinals and *kumbari*, on the one hand, and consanguineals on the other, but, in Vasilika at least, it is not a difference of preponderant functional importance. In practice, any significant relationships established even between consanguineal kin outside of the elementary family are voluntarily arranged, and this element of the situation is more important than is the fact that the pool of blood kin from whom a man or woman can make the choice is predetermined.

Let us summarize the situation this way: A man and his elementary family can normally provide all the personnel needed for the year-round functions on his farm. At peak periods the farmer hires the necessary additional labor. However, from time to time he may need temporary help. He may need an extra horse for plowing, or he may want to join with someone to fill a truck with grain for a trip to the mill or with cotton for a trip to the gin; or he may need an extra hand or two to string tobacco or to separate cotton from the pod, or he may want someone to help with irrigation, or he may wish to join with another family for the Easter feast. For both giving and receiving assistance of this kind, Vasilika's farmers seem to consider all the village's inhabitants, kin or non-kin, *kumbari* or non-*kumbari*, neighbor or non-neighbor, as almost equally suitable candidates. A farmer may choose one non-neighbor villager who has a good horse, and exchange plowing assistance with him, a next-door neighbor with whom he joins in sending grain to the mill, a village sister to help with tobacco stringing to whom he gives a bottle of wine or the like in return, and so on. Moreover, none of these arrangements is necessarily permanent; the personnel may vary from year to year and from season to season. Indeed, shifting relationships of this kind are more common than permanent ones. From our point of view, the significance lies in the fact that whether or not kin are involved, the type of association is the same.

There is one notable exception. No matter how valuable assistance might be, it is not sought after if the individuals capable of rendering it belong to a family with whom there is an acute, even if temporary, disagreement. For example, although one of the village girls was adept at giving penicillin injections, a woman from a family which was on bad terms with that of the girl preferred to leave the village for a week to live with a town relative who was also capable of giving the injections. The trip was inconvenient for the ill woman's family, and since she was not fond of her relative, the visit was actually distasteful to her. But neither of these considerations was compelling enough to have her choose what in her and her family's opinion was the worse alternative—to ask assistance from a village family with whom they were currently in acrimonious rivalry. Feuding of this kind can occur among kin as well as among neighbors.

Apart from the agricultural production cycle and other predominantly village-centered activities, Vasilika's farmers need help in arranging marriages, in educating their children, in finding employment, in dealing with government officials and with merchants to whom they sell their produce. They also want some urban associations simply for prestige, and to provide a place to stay if they visit towns and cities. For these extra-village purposes, a farmer is more likely

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first to survey his consanguineal kin, his affinals, and his *kumbari*. From among these, he may choose one of his first cousins with whom his son will board while he goes to the gymnasium, one of his sons-in-law who is a civil servant to help with tax problems, one of his *kumbari* to recommend a merchant, and so on. Again, the farmer chooses different individuals from among those potentially helpful to him by virtue of their statuses and need not ask any one person to help him in more than one way. Once more the relationships need not be permanent; if for any reason they prove unsatisfactory, a man shifts to another individual. Moreover, the farmer reciprocates these favors in various ways, for example, by taking his cousin's child for the summer, by offering hospitality to *kumbari* at festival times, or by getting information about village girls from among whom his urban connection may want to arrange a marriage. If a farmer can find no one among his group of consanguineal kin, his affinals, and his *kumbari* who is willing to enter into an agreement with him for these extra-village needs, he turns to his fellow villagers and neighbors and attempts to attach himself to their network of extra-village associations.

What Vasilika's farmers do not do is attempt to establish new and direct relationships with complete strangers, that is, persons or agencies outside the network of their own or their fellow villagers' extra-village associations.

In sum, then, outside of the elementary family, a Vasilika farmer expects to establish voluntary relationships with a number of different individuals from each of whom he expects the fulfillment of a limited set of obligations to himself, and toward each of whom he will fulfill an equivalent but usually not identical set of obligations. Each man is the center of a series of varied relationships in which those with whom he associates himself have no necessary connections with each other. He is the hub of a wheel that has no rim.

George Foster has called paired relationships of this kind "dyadic contracts" (Foster, 1961). He believes they will occur in societies in which the number of people to whom a man can have culturally defined obligations is so large that it is not possible for him to fulfill them all. Men and women, therefore, choose from among their many kin, godparents and the like, those with whom they will make dyadic contracts. The people and the situation in which the contract is enforced vary from time to time. Foster suggests that such sets of paired relationships deter the development of factional groups. The idea of the dyadic contract is an extraordinarily useful concept for understanding the relationships I have just described for Vasilika, and Foster's analysis illuminates the consequences of what I have just called a situation in which each man or woman is the hub of a rimless wheel.

In the next chapter, the quality of the human relations characteristic of the elementary family and of the other types of associations of the villagers will be discussed.

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reply is commonly *"Amesos!"* "Immediately!" or *"Eftasa!"* "I have arrived already!" These answers are forms only; younger children often set out at a run; others proceed at whatever pace pleases them at the moment. But the significance of these phrases for us is that *"glighora"* is never used by a younger person to an older one.

These expressions of deference, on the one hand, and of imperiousness, on the other, are outward signs of noncompeting relationships, because each age group and, by extension, each social status has rights, duties, and obligations, with one set of these shading gradually into the other with sufficient separation so that a complementary rather than a competing relationship predominates. Preschool children are expected to learn what elders in all categories teach them and otherwise have few responsibilities. School children, both boys and girls, take on the burdens of life, because their success in school is a matter of vital concern to themselves and their families. During school holidays school children from ages seven to twelve are expected to help with farm work. When they have finished elementary school the children consider themselves adult (they said so in a set of essays we asked them to write on what they wanted to do when they were grown) and expect to contribute to the welfare of their families, either by taking on more and more responsibilities on the farm, or by apprenticeships to trades. This is the period in which comradeship is most possible. Each boy tends to have one other boy as a friend and companion. They visit festivals together, go to the coffeehouse, and play cards together. Girls have less opportunity for free movement and are more likely to sit and work with their age companions in neighborhood work groups. Whatever work these older boys and girls do on the farm is supervised by their elders, and the supervision is accepted. Nevertheless, as explained already, each person has the right to contribute his suggestions and advice, and although a father or older man has the right to make the final decision, he rarely chooses one that will anger his younger assistants.

Here again, the young people work in a complementary relation with other members of the family; their goals are the same as those of their elders—to do well so that a good marriage can eventually be arranged—and the various means by which to achieve these goals are not in dispute. In spite of the rapid and accelerating technological and material changes in the village since the end of World War I, these changes have not led to conflicts between the generations. As earlier chapters have indicated, old people are basically no less "progressive" than their juniors; young and old continue to agree on the goals and on the means to achieve them as they change, and each has his part to play in the achievement of the approved ends. The grandparent generation joins with the rest.

Once the young people have married, they either continue as farmers in the household of their parents and gradually take over more of the supervision of the work, or work separately as a new elementary family. Therefore, to return to our original remark, the agonistic quality is not characteristic of relations between the generations.

The kind of competition we have been describing as agonistic does not prevail between the sexes in Vasilika. Men and women are considered far too different from each other for that.

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wife must overcome overt cultural attitudes of deference and covert attitudes of sexual mistrust as well as what are undoubtedly unconscious conflicts about sexuality.

If there is tension between men and women in Vasilika, why is it possible to say that agonistic relationships do not exist between them? It is because the cultural differentiation and separation of the sexes makes them unequal and therefore not in a position for the direct, overt competition of which agonistic relations consist. The maintenance of this differentiation in the qualities and characteristics of women acts as a foil for the men—once again the contrast gives meaning to the self. For women, also, the contrast serves as a means of self-identification.

If age and sex are not the lines along which agonistic relations occur in Vasilika, then what is the structure of these relationships? Essentially, agonistic relations occur among those who, from the standpoint of village culture, are both separate and equal, and among men of the same age categories and women of the same age categories who are not members of the same elementary family and are in the same or adjacent social positions. This includes brothers in their relationships with each other and sisters in theirs, once these have married and have elementary families of their own. I have already suggested that brothers are rivals, and sisters also compete for the greater success of their husbands and children. Within the village, people who are not related to each other compete also, as do the people of Vasilika with the inhabitants of neighboring villages.

It is now possible to understand why, from the villagers' point of view, their cooperative arrangements with each other and with their urban connections tend to be impermanent (see the end of Chapter 4). Each request for help and each response to the request becomes part of the competitive struggle. The value of what is given and what is received must be judged at each encounter, and the potentialities for imbalance are always present and are frequently realized.

The alignments of kin and non-kin which lead outside the village and the quality of human relationships, both among the people of Vasilika and with those outside the village, have bearing on the nature of the village as a solidary community. This matter is the subject of the last chapter.

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tional activities, although ultimately controlled in Athens, function through different organizational channels. The unity that might be achieved by overlapping personnel in a village as small as Vasilika is not, in fact, achieved because each of the formal divisions has its own leadership. Some degree of concurrence exists, however, as a result of the tendency for the leaders in each of these spheres, except the governmental, to remain relatively permanent. The priest has been the religious leader of the community for a generation, the former secretary of the council had been in office for twenty years, the school teacher has been there for ten years, and so on. Nevertheless, officials who want to persuade Vasilika's population to some new course of action know that they cannot succeed by persuading the formal leaders only, or even the influential older men only, but must convince each head of a family, as well, if they are to get widespread compliance.

It would seem as though the formal organization of the village, and the family activities which so often lead out of the village and separate the interests of each family from those of others in the settlement, prevent the life-long daily associations of the men of the village from producing a driving force for enthusiastic joint action for village-wide goals. Nor does the system of voluntary, impermanent dyadic contracts between individuals produce any large groups with a sense of solidarity. As the foregoing has shown, then, there are activities which focus the attention of all the villagers but there is little active village-wide cooperation for village enterprises.

Yet this situation seems to conflict with the professed attitude of Vasilika's inhabitants toward their village and region. The villagers speak of Vasilika in the way Greeks from other villages speak of their home communities. A man or woman's *patridha*, that is, his village of origin in this context (*patridha* may mean Greece as one's nation of origin in contrast with other nations), is always recommended as a place to visit. People frequently mentioned certain qualities of their home villages which were worthy of praise. The air and the water, they would say, are clean, in the sense of pure and sweet, and these characteristics, they thought, made the village a healthy place, and, by extension, potentially therapeutic for anyone. The people of one's own village were *endopyi* (home folks) in contrast to *kseni* (strangers), and the term *kseni* was used equally to refer to a man from Parori two miles away, and to us from the United States thousands of miles distant.

Kseni, people not living in Vasilika, were described as thieves and as inhospitable. We were consistently told to lock our automobile in other villages, and also consistently told that it was not necessary to do so in Vasilika. Indeed, both with respect to other villages and within Vasilika itself, a distrust of others was most frequently expressed by saying that the villagers in question were thieves, and it was an accusation not meant lightly. On two occasions before we understood the situation, when we mislaid a pair of scissors and some clothespins, we asked the family with which we lived whether any one of them had seen the lost items. The family construed the question as an accusation that they had stolen the items from us, and it took several hours of reassuring conversation to convince them that we had meant nothing of the kind. Evidence suggests that

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Evidence suggests that
an individual's or family's *filotimo* would be considered severely damaged if they stole from a stranger to whom hospitality had been offered; in fact, such thefts are very rare in any Greek village. Within Vasilika itself, there was some petty filching now and then, but it did not occur on the scale one would have expected from the frequent references to theft and thieving in conversation.

The inhospitality of people in other places was a frequent topic of conversation at the homes of those celebrating name days. A man could always raise a laugh by describing the ludicrously meager food and drink provided at a wedding or name day celebration he had attended at another village. Usually in response to any questions about the occurrence in Vasilika of deviant behavior, or of some form of discord, or of some moral transgression, the villagers began by making a general statement of denial. Such things happened in other villages, they would say, but not in Vasilika.

It would seem from the foregoing that Vasilika's population did, indeed, identify itself with the village as an entity. Vasilika is their *patridha*, and it must be thought to have good qualities, I believe, because the village's qualities reflect on its inhabitants both in their status as individuals and as families. Pride in the village, then, may be an extension of pride in oneself or one's family, and the functional consequences for village-wide enterprises of the existence of such pride depend on the strength of the competing sources of satisfaction.

In Vasilika, since farms may be maintained by the labor of the elementary family with only periodic requirements for a larger labor force, since sons and daughters leave the village and yet maintain relationships with those still in Vasilika, and since individuals can expect to give and to receive protection from their families, the forces leading toward either independence or family solidarity would appear to be strong enough to leave little energy for village-centered activities as a method of augmenting self-esteem. Nevertheless, the village as an entity constitutes a permanent potential source of satisfaction for its inhabitants, and now and then, under certain circumstances, the village itself becomes the primary object of loyalty for its population and commands some sacrifice. The boundary dispute with Parori was such an occasion for Vasilika. Moreover, any individual can, if he wishes, use his energies when he occupies an official position to gain improvements for the village as a means of enhancing his own self-esteem and of gaining the respect of the villagers, as long as he does not do so at the expense of his own children. The people of Vasilika are entirely willing to enjoy and to speak proudly of the electricity, or the piped water, or the better roads in Vasilika, once they have obtained them, even if they are not always willing to work together to achieve the improvements.

But Vasilika, as a village, must compete with another focus of loyalty for its inhabitants besides the family: Greekness itself—and the Greek nation as a political entity. The villagers' awareness of and pride in their Greekness is profound. In 1956 when we were questioning the children as to what they wanted to be when they grew up, several boys answered that they hoped God would let them grow strong and sturdy so that they could be good soldiers and go to "Fight for Cyprus." Moreover, the villagers associate certain qualities with Greek ethnicity: the desire for political independence and the willingness

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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466 [Town Life]
472 20 COUNTRY AND PEOPLE
602 against the clamorous demands of deserving relatives who badly need a job.

466 The strong egalitarian spirit that runs through Greek life
557 works in a somewhat parallel fashion to undermine the effi-
476 ciency of large concerns. When every man feels himself just as good as everybody else, personal loyalty to a superior in a bureaucratic organization is difficult to establish. A bold spirit is sorely tempted to launch some sort of petty intrigue against his immediate boss, in the hope of displacing him and perhaps inheriting the position. More cautious persons are prone to develop a false servility and flattery of their superiors, in the hope
[609] of winning special confidence and favor. Both attitudes interfere with the effectiveness of large-scale organization; and both arise in large part from the underlying distrust Greeks feel toward anyone outside the sacred circle of the family.

Observations such as these are, of course, impressionistic, and it is not difficult to find many exceptions to the rule. Yet no one can deny that petty intrigue, nepotism and a remarkably ruthless pursuit of individual self-interest are far more widespread in Greece than in more industrially advanced countries. Indeed, these psychological characteristics of the Greek people perhaps have much to do with the relatively backward state of their technology, quite apart from the financial and physical difficulties which also hinder the development of large-scale modern industry in the country. Modern technology is, after all, incompatible with small-scale family enterprise; cooperation of larger numbers of men is necessary, and the traditions of the Greek people make such cooperation difficult to achieve.

This psychological attitude clearly makes the position of wage and salary earners less satisfactory than it might otherwise be. Anyone who has had any contact with the fierce intrigue that often disfigures personal relations among a group of Greek employees is likely to wonder how men can endure such ten-

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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[Town Life]

sions, only to remember how precious a job is to every Greek, and how impossible it is for a man to throw up a position in disgust in the hope of finding another and better one. There are, however, other factors which make the position of wage and salary earners difficult, and foster chronic discontent among them.

Wages are low, and are constantly in danger of being undercut by young men coming from the villages in search of work. Such new arrivals can often afford to work for less than a regular urban resident, for they have no homes or families to maintain, and can, in summer at least, sleep outdoors and eat very little in order to save a small sum with which to return home in the fall. As a result, a large part of the building trades, for example, is in the hands of migrant labor. Unions can do little to improve wages or working conditions when dozens of applicants seek every job that opens, and are ready, if need be, to bid against one another in order to get employment at all. Moreover, the prestige accorded to white-collar work and to immunity from manual toil obviously puts the working class at a psychological disadvantage, and builds up a sense of grievance among those condemned to labor with their hands.

Like the hill villagers, the workingmen of the towns were deeply infiltrated by Communist propaganda during the second world war. Attacks upon the rich, as traitors to the nation and oppressors of the poor, won widespread response. And indeed, the conduct of the small group of wealthy men in Greece lent some color to the accusations which Communists launched against them. Most men of property felt it more vital to safeguard their possessions than to join in any active resistance to the German and Italian authorities. Many of them exhibited the same ruthlessness against everyone beyond the family circle that most Greeks exhibit, and did so even when people were actually starving in the streets, as they were in 1941. Acts of

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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Paleo Corinthos

[Villages of the Plains]

recent years, this was the one the villagers most praised, perhaps because it was the newest.

Very considerable inequalities in landholding exist within the village. As a result, some families have profited far more than others from the new prosperity. Since the Greek War of Independence (1821–30), if not before, landholdings in Old Corinth have not been disturbed by wholesale government action, of the sort characteristic in the northern part of the country. The processes of inheritance and marriage settlements, supplemented by purchase and sale of land – something almost unheard of in the northern villages – have resulted in the establishment of extremely complicated property relationships. Renting and sharecropping are both common. In addition, many fields are subject to concurrent rights held by several individuals. This situation arises when heirs have refrained from subdividing an inheritance because such division would reduce the fields to absurdly small dimensions. Instead it has long been the custom to cultivate such fields as a unit and to divide the proceeds, according to some agreed proportion, among all those who have a claim thereto. Over the generations, such concurrent rights have sometimes ramified widely; but the complications of remote family and property relationships are something Greek peasant farmers are able to keep very clear in their heads, with or without written documents.

A substantial proportion of the inhabitants of Old Corinth possess no land at all. They make a living by working for others, either for day wages or on a sharecropping basis. With the introduction of tomatoes and other vegetable crops, together with the revival of the currant market, a definite, though seasonal, shortage of labor has appeared. Substantial farmers (that is, men owning 10 to 20 acres of land) complained of not being able to find enough hands to help them cultivate their fields, even though the wages they paid in the currant fields were

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Harvest time is the best season for the lovers to express their love to each other. It is the time for the seasonal rush work at which people help each other. Groups of /25/ people work together and when returning home late in the evening both boys and girls sing songs that they compose in which they express their interest to each other. When parents do not agree on the proposal of the son for a certain girl, the only way to get away with it is to decide to run away with the girl.

The breaking of these holy traditions the older men of the village think is due to the railroad station which is so close to the village and the influence of city life. Another important factor that has poisoned the life of their village was the labor that started coming to the village for work. During the tobacco and opium crop years when labor was needed, the village at some seasons doubled its population with the addition of foreign labor. These people brought in short dresses, hats, silk stockings, high heel shoes and European dancing. With the passing away of these crops due to depression years the labor left the village but their influence stayed behind especially among the young. The priest, the teacher, and the "Gerousia" of the village tried hard to drive them away but all in vain.

The younger generation found a better way to give a solution to their heart's desire when their parents /26/ objected. Young men will help each other in running away with their girls. A group of them will guard the road from which the girl will pass either with knives or guns. As soon as she appears they stop her and put her on the horse with her sweetheart. While the couple goes to the designated village the rest of the group give a fight to the opposing party. The young couple appear before a priest in the other village and perform the religious ceremonies. Then their return to the village is settled by the friends of the couple. Cases of this kind are increasing in Megali Vrisi. Centuries-old traditions that have enslaved the free expression of men are being torn down and the youth find himself in freedom of self expression.

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Sickle	2	40	
Axes	1	70	
Wagons	1	2,500	
			4,200
		Grand total	31,510

A one crop farm does not offer regular income year after year. Due to diversity of climatic conditions there are on the average 3 good years to one poor year. Because of the recent settlement of the farmers their needs are great not only for their families but also for their farms, such as tools, animals, stables, barns, better houses and payment of their loans. The poor years increase the debts of the farmer tremendously and if unable to pay them he tries to find a refuge by telling lies.

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The Pattern of Land use. One of the greatest troubles that the farmer of Megali Vrisi has is in getting to and from his fields. His share of land which is composed of 45 stremas (10 1/2 acres), is divided into 7 fields. The smallest piece is 1/4 of an acre and the largest 2 acres. The government in its endeavor to give equal chance to all farmers has divided the land into /46/ 7 categories according to fertility and the distance from the village. Thus the nearest field is 1/5 of a mile and the farthest one is 4 1/2 miles. This type of division, besides consuming time to and from the fields and tiring the animals with unnecessary walking, also reduces the productiveness through poor management of the fields. Rotation is neglected since the farmers having their fields in certain section have to agree on crop plantation with their neighbors. The fencing of the individual fields is impossible and anyone can pasture any field after the crops are removed. There is a law that gives the right of pasturing the fields by anyone after the crops are removed.

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We can summarize the good and bad points for such a distribution of land.

Advantages:

1. Gives equal opportunity to each farmer to have equal share of fertile as well as of infertile land.

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The low water table of only 18 to 24 feet, the flat land that will make irrigation easy, the nearness to the railroad station and to a big city, are the outstanding privileges of the farmer of Megali Vrisi to shift his farming methods and produce enough to improve his family living conditions. Nothing could meet his economic needs better than the combination of dairying with small cereals. 241

/56/ Cooperative Activities. A village system and the type of farming such as in Megali Vrisi makes cooperative movement essential. The limited capital of the individual farmer makes it hard to conduct his farming operations successfully. The type of living together has brought them the spirit of cooperation. Before any kind of organized cooperative movement started, there was already very close cooperation among the villagers in hiring a common shepherd, sharing alike in the erection and care of the school and church, repairing the roads, helping each other at harvest and in numerous other ways. The cooperative spirit was taught to them in the family from the type of family life they were living. Nothing explains so well their success in being able to establish themselves in the village, in such a short time as work-through the cooperative to help each other. 621 476 [241] [474] [866]

Since the settlement of the village the people organized a cooperative with a capital of $15,000. A threshing machine and a tractor of 64 horsepower was bought. All the farmers thresh their cereals and pay 11% of the crop. With the accumulated capital a flour mill with four grinding stones was built. The flour mill, besides serving the village, draws customers from the neighboring villages. The flour mill charges 3% /57/ of the grain. The cooperative organized a grocery which serves the members. It also bought 3 improved pure-bred bulls for the village herd. The cooperative has its own 15 acres of land where it conducts experiments for the farmers of the village with fertilizers, seeds and grass plants. All loans from the Agricultural Bank are made through the cooperative. All the Caucasians are members, but only 65% of the Thracians are members. The cooperative is one 241 474 [407] [256] [444] [232] [621]

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Medical care. The only village in the area that has the best medical service is Megali Vrisi. The efforts of the nurse and the doctor slowly are gaining ground and more and more the people follow their principles of caring for the sick. The newly-erected hospital in the nearby city of Kilkis provides care for the inhabitants of the area free of charge. If the patient is very sick he usually is taken there, where he can find specialized doctors. 758 759 [178] [743]

The construction of the living houses is so poorly done in the village that the care of the sick under such conditions is hard. The windows are small and the mud floor with severe cold winds of the winter and no proper fuel to warm the house makes it harder yet to care for the sick. 758 362

The mutual assistance of relatives in sickness as well as of neighbors is great. People at times of /66/ great difficulties help each other, not only through labor but by giving each other food and even money. Especially is this characteristic of this people to share alike each other's burdens and partake actively in their grief and sorrow. 758 476 621

The Faith Healer. People of experience and cleverness perform certain magical performances that convince the people of their ability to command the spirits. Most of the inhabitants of Megali Vrisi believe them and spend money and time to visit them. People suffering from chronic diseases, or if born with defects of the body, or if unable to bear any child, find as the answer to their discouraged condition the faith healers. 755 [842]

Some Saints who perform miracles for donating to them; a lamb, a hen, a goat, or a cow, may, in return, act favorably for the patient. Priests praying for the sick or for the crippled are not uncommon. On special holidays, certain churches fill up with such sick and crippled people. Some sleep in the church for weeks without food and pray continuously to the Saint. Stories circulate that some one saw the Saint riding on the horse, are very common. Sometimes these saints actually do heal indirectly local pains, even of the partly crippled. Even doctors 755 782 776 [793] [787]

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or a father is unable to punish their children, they report /72/ them to the teacher and he gives the proper punishment. Students stand at attention and salute their teachers wherever they see him. They are ready to fulfill his orders regardless of the parents' approval. The parents have no right to complain about any kind of punishment to the student by the teacher, regardless of how severe it is.

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Every child from 6 to 13 years of age has to complete the grammar school. Education is compulsory by the government. A father who suspends his child from school is fined.

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Besides the grammar school there was another agent that acted as an educational organization for adult education. The graduates of the grammar school of the ages from 14 to 20 years were organized in winter farm courses. Their schedule of lessons was based on the farm survey of their village and on the questionnaire which was put to them to find out what they would like to learn during winter months. The lessons were mostly field work and very little class work. Each student, besides following the different jobs of his father's occupation, takes active part in a cooperative project. This cooperative project is the /73/ central theme around which the different lessons are organized. The project is based on some common but unknown factor that the students try to investigate. Special committees from among the group are appointed to divide the jobs at different seasons to every one. Careful accounts are kept of the share of labor of each student, of the cost of the project, and of the climatic conditions under which the project was conducted. At the end of the project year, each student receives his share of income according to the number of hours he worked.

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The most effective phase of this project is the yearly demonstration of the work done by the students to the farmers of the village, the work done, the money spent and results obtained. It is one of the convincing methods to show the farmer how to improve his methods of farming by introducing either better

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/73 cont./ fertilizing methods or rotation methods or introduction of new legume plants or a new variety of wheat. As a rule, their effect on the farmers is great with definite results.

Thus the future farmers of Megali Vrisi, working cooperatively, felt the need of adopting new methods and passing on to others the results of their /74/ investigations. It is surprising to know how effectively the cooperative project has tied up these fellows in undertaking to do other jobs useful for their village.

The individual project idea was a failure. People who live in the same village, still under the patriarchial type of family life and whose problems are so closely interwoven, cannot help but cooperate and support whole-heartedly cooperative work. This very same idea led those boys to build a community hall and a stage for theatrical shows. The whole structure was built by personal work and what money was saved from theatrical shows at Christmas. The group learned Christmas carols and sang them to every house in the village. The contributions from this event were used for the poor of the village. The small reforestation project which was started by this group has led to the development of the "Day of the Green", at which day everyone in the village planted a tree on the hill.

The yearly athletic day event that provides an enjoyable gathering for the village was planned by the young men.

/75/ One can easily foresee the future of such a community which will be handled by people who learned to cooperate so well in their youth. This vocational education meant more to the lives of these young men than what they got from the grammar school.

Invasion of adult education. The Greek government, feeling great responsibility toward these people, who during the wars of 1912-1913, 1914-1918, and 1920-1922, lost the chance of attending schools, provided special evening lessons in each village. The lessons were handled by the teacher in the local school and thus many of these men and women had a chance to learn how

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The village was ruled by "Gerousia", a group composed of old respected people. It is interesting here to note that even today the Greek Senate is called "Gerousia". This "Gerousia" would meet when necessary to discuss certain problems concerning their village. They had no definite calendar for meeting nor approved place for meetings. There were two dates well observed for meetings. One was St. Demeter's day -- October 26th -- for deciding to hire a village shepherd for the cattle and a guard for the fields. Another meeting which was fairly definite, was St. Constantin's day -- May 24th -- at which the redistribution of the land was decided for the coming seven years. It was one of the well-observed economic principles to redistribute the pasture for farming and leave the cultivated land for pasture. Due to the increase or decrease of the family members the land had to be redistributed /85/ according to the number of heads in the family. Once the land was given, the owner could use it as he pleased but could not pass it on to the relatives or friends. The land belonged to the village. There was another order which every one had to follow strictly. No one was allowed to increase his livestock on the community pasture, but he could increase it on hired pasture land from near by villages.

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Away from every kind of complicated civilization the Caucasians had a world of their own and found it better to preserve it centuries after centuries without adulterating it with the modern civilization.

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Most of the church, school and community problems were solved by the "Gerousia" without a general meeting or vote. The decision of "Gerousia" on any problem was final. Local conflicts and neighborhood grievances were taken care of by "Gerousia". Repairing school buildings, or church, or taking care of the poor and unfortunate were closely followed up by this group.

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This cooperative spirit for mutual aid is rarely found among any people except the Caucasians. /86/ The rush harvest season is shared alike by all. Building houses, threshing and transportation of agricultural goods is done through borrowed labor. If any, by

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[Caucasus]

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misfortune, loses his house or livestock, the whole village shares in providing everything. Seldom does one find any one suffering in a Caucasian village. It has been a common expression among other groups to say that the Caucasians as individuals are worthless but as a group none could surpass them. This shows how effective this compound family life influenced the person's whole behavior and attitude. 476 621

Fertilizing the fields was unknown to these people. Even livestock manure was not valued very much and was used as fuel. Their method of improving the fertility of the land was to rest it for several years and the longer the rest the better for the field. For better results it was advisable to let the animals pasture the land. They always thought there was something magic in the hoofs of the animals. This was proven to them by grazing the winter wheat and barley early in the spring. They found better stooling and more yield. Even today they still believe it but cannot afford to try it under the new climatic conditions. (The reason why the hoofs had so much magic is explained as follows. /87/ Due to thawing of the ground the roots of the wheat and barley plants were exposed to the air and pasturing early in the spring was a method of packing the soil instead of using a roller to pack it so as to protect the roots of the plants.) 241

The culture of the Thracian group was just the opposite of that of the Caucasians. Although at the door-step of Asiatic and European civilization, these people have lived far from both. The frequent movement from their village due to continuous wars in that area, and the hardships they suffered has changed the life of each one of them and has made them pessimistic. They look at life and on the world as a whole with indignation and scornful attitude. This continuous movement has forced upon them the belief that everything was in vain and that life had little difference from animal life. The Thracians are strictly individualistic, not interested in community affairs or group life. They look at every one with suspicion, believe no one except themselves. They have no benevolent spirit and the misery of their neighbors make no 621 167 181 [178]

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impression on them. Even their wives and children are treated like slaves. The suffering of their children or their wives moves them /88/ very little. How much the hard life of wars affected them it is hard to tell.

Here on the one hand we have the unfriendly, resistant, apathetic, inferior Thracian, while on the other hand we have the friendly, frank, responsive, broad-minded and feeling-superior of the Caucasian. The pessimistic, the unconscious, unstable, unmannered, stupid and unreliable Thracian, to live with the optimistic, sensitive, self-assured, stable, mannered, intelligent and reliable Caucasian.

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Here were two groups, one ready to sacrifice time and material to improve the new village, while the other group could do nothing that was beyond the home yard. The Thracians as farmers are hard working and are contented with the old wooden plow, a one-room house, a kettle to cook in and a bowl for the whole family to eat from. Their agriculture was still primitive and fertilizers were unknown. The Thracians, like the Caucasians, believed too much in magic and that the good harvest year was largely in the hands of the divine spirit.

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Living together was hard for both groups under such conditions. The Caucasians, traditionally influenced by their community improvement ambition, started with /89/ enthusiasm to build and improve what they already found. The mutual aid, such as in barn-raising, exchange of labor, lending teams, lending tools, lending money and even food stuffs, caring for the sick and comforting the bereaved is widespread. The rush of harvesting and threshing is done cooperatively. When one once was questioned, "How do you have such a fine mutual assistance", the answer was as follows: "Well, you see one side of the picture only, that is the work part of it. The people who cooperate have the greatest fun in working, eating and drinking together. Some of the love songs find expression at such occasions like harvesting or threshing." The Caucasians were taught in their own world how to get more out of life. They know that happiness was born

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a twin, and when they mourn they mourn together. Their sentimental songs are always tinged with the air of sadness. Even at the funerals they sing the same songs which they sing when they have a merry time. Mutual aid is the characteristic quality of the Caucasians in their work, in their joy, and in their sorrow. On the contrary, the Thracians are strictly individualistic and regard mutual aid as the sign of laziness. 621 476 [533] [152]

/90/ Conflicts. Regardless of the mutual aid and the cooperation they have, the conflicts are very prevalent. They occur either among the two groups or among the members of one group. The causes of the conflicts are for controlling the village cooperative, the mayorship of the village, or as a consequence of a proposal to marriage which was declined. It is important here to note that regardless of the conflict situation if the "Gerousia" wanted to finish a certain community project they all shared alike the burden. In spite of the official power the cooperative has and the organized super-imposed government mayor has, the "Gerousia", the unofficial body of old men is the real axis or the center of any unanimous movement. Conflicts which are temporarily settled by the mayor or by the goverment courts eventually reach the peaceful settlement of the "Gerousia" who know so well how to make the people forgive each other. The judge at the courts reads the law and enforces the punishment according to the act, but "Gerousia" knows so well the past of every one and even the type of family for one or two generations and touches the pride of every one by enumerating the good qualities and good dispositions of his father or grandfather. The position of "Gerousia" is that of a father and the effect they have on the person is lasting. Jealousies, small /91/ fights and family difficulties are settled by "Gerousia". This group is a government within a government, officially unknown, but it stands as the only guiding hand for the village community. At times of great distress and difficulties, people consult the "Gerousia". The church, the priest, the teacher and the doctor do not have as constructive an influence as the "Gerousia" does. It is not a voted body but has the unofficial 623 627 578 [692] [554]

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Thracians were of the worst type and usually would end with bloodshed.

Social Control, Formal and Informal Aspects of Control. [623]
The "Gerousia" usually exercised a degree of informal control over its members through its generally-accepted definitions of what is right or wrong. [692] The government courts had little influence in this. There was no stealing among the Caucasians; many families would leave their houses unlocked and work in the fields; [685] their implements scattered in the yards and the poultry nests out in the open.

Drinking is among the forms of behavior against which the women of Megali Vrisi voice their disapproval. 626 All the men drink, 273 but actually there are few who drink for the sake of getting drunk. When I ventured to ask some of those who get drunk, "Why they do it", almost everyone of them said, "to forget the miserable life". Some of them, due to deportations and wars, have lost all property, wives and children and the only comfort they find is to get drunk and get sentimental and weep.

/94/ Community Events. The recently organized community 543 fairs represent the inception of social organization for the pro- 621 motion of recreation. The purpose of these fairs was competition 476 in agricultural products and wholesome recreation, which meant 578 so much to these villagers, but social conflict soon discontinued these fairs. Outsiders were invited to talk at these occasions and athletic events would give it a happy ending.

The Use of Leisure Time and Visiting. One of the major 461 problems that confronts every one working in Megali Vrisi is how 517 to use the excess leisure time more profitably. This excess leisure 241 time is the cause of conflicts and drunkenness. Due to the nature [578] of their agriculture the rush work season comes in the fall for two months and two months in summer. The rest of the time very little work is done in the fields. During the winter months from December to April there is no farm work except the chores which are done by the women. This long slack season is an acute problem for the farmers themselves. From morning until late in

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of their occupation but rather because of certain peculiar personal qualities which they possess. Such a cast of characters is very evident in Megali Vrisi. Most of these are due to their ability to speak fluently, or to tell stories, read and interpret the news from the papers or forecast future events. Some of these rank the lowest in the economic scale and their influence is not effective beyond the village boundaries. These personalities become the central guides for the decisions of many persons. Both Thracian and Caucasians have these types of personalities. 156 554

Community organization. The village of Megali Vrisi is a loosely organized village. The various groups and associations are independently organized and function without any cooperation of the other whatsoever. There is competition and constant conflict as to which one is the leading group in the village, but in spite of the conflicts and lack of cooperation among the groups, compared with the neighboring villages /101/ the village is the leading one. This unexplainable progress is mostly due to the constructive and not the destructive type of competition of the different groups, which instead of hindering them is enabling them to get ahead. According to Professor Sanderson, "The coordination of group activities is the heart of social organization insofar as it is related to community welfare, and the importance of community organization in the every day life of its people is apparent." The wholesome competition among the different groups for accomplishing their group projects may be due to the following: 621 476 178

1. Within every member of the different organizations or associations there is an inherent feeling of mutual aid and that the progress of each group is the progress of their village.

2. There are persons who hold office in more than two groups and thus there is this indirect cooperation.

3. It is an accepted principle that each group follows its well-defined program without expecting it to be considered as the only one that needs support.

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4. The different organizations are a part of the people. Nothing is introduced by outsiders nor advocated by any one person, but through centuries have become an accepted principle of their community life to watch their community improve from all around.

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Conclusions to be drawn from the village of Megali Vrisi.

1. The new village has two distinct type of people with their pattern of customs.

2. The Government's attempt to mould the customs of these groups into one may face difficulties at the beginning.

3. Both groups semi-primitive in the sense of having:

a. Patriarchal pattern type of family.
b. Father having the buying and selling
c. Both women and children doing farm work, unending toil of women.
d. Education or training rests with the grandparents.
e. Agriculture for making a living

/103/ f. Common land and pasture; no ownership.

g. Lack of knowledge of fertilizers.
h. Magic strongly believed by both groups.
i. Purpose of marriage was to have the labor of women and for raising children.
j. Land divided in many patches and scattered.
k. The "Gerousia" as the only powerful and effective group in community government.
l. Religion of paganistic type.
m. Business in its primitive form of exchanging goods.
n. Mutual aid very characteristic.

The low cash income, backward farm techniques, with too much emphasis on the subsidized wheat crop, poor housing and household equipment, inadequately balanced diet, disregard of proper sanitation and other preventive measures against disease, inadequate medical attention, absence of recreational opportunities, impractical religion, slow educational processes without vital

9:Megas I,B-5,4 (no date) 1951 EH1 Greece EH1

114 Folklore Archives of the Academy of Athens, by the Society «Greek
*342 Popular Art», by the Ministry of Reconstruction and independently by various Greek or foreign scholars of Folklore and Architecture.

121 When I began these studies at the Didymoteichon area, some 25
*342 years ago, my purpose was different: it was to study the customs and habits of the people, in relation to their religious practices. But, when I entered the house of the peasants, I had to face a multitude of questions, pertaining to the methods of popular construction, the disposition and arrangement of space, the stabling of the cattle, the storage of cereals and their protection from humidity and rats, questions to be solved not only by reference to climate, soil, biology or history, but which had an immediate relation to the other factor, the one that dominates and regulates all the others, the factor of man.

• [476] Thus, I felt an attraction towards the house as a dwelling and at the same time as a work that came out of the hands of the peasants who build their own houses in this area, as in many other parts of Greece, on the system of mutual social assistance.

My attention was especially drawn to the variety of architectural forms, presenting an interconnection and an inter-relation, and showing an organical evolution, natural to every human activity.

The examination of these houses would help me in discovering the original form, from which the present type of dwelling has gradually evolved. If a house presented a modification or an increase of spaces, I had to find out how these modifications or additions were made, how the new spaces were adjusted to the original nucleus of the house, how they were later included in the house as a whole and formed with it a new and increased type of dwelling. That is why I did not limit my study to one or two most representative types, but extended it to all the modifications and variations, as I tried to find the way followed by popular architecture from the simpler to the more composite forms.

At the same time, I studied the ways and methods of house building, how the roof, the hearth, the storeroom, the oven and the loom were constructed. Thus in spite of the many technical difficulties I had to overcome, I found that the study of popular dwellings was the most interesting and fascinating, and at the same time, the least explored part of my folklore researches. The folklorist may thus clearly see in this study how the man of the people, following traditional types and systems he inherited from his ancestors, adapts them every time to the actual facts and means at his disposal, so that they may satisfy his needs and the needs of his family

are concerned. Greek parents are agreed that the principal thing to teach their children is to be honest and to tell the truth; but this, of course, means to be honest in their dealings with their parents and other relatives and all the friends of these, and with people who value them and trust them as persons. Honesty in abstraction is not a virtue, and may even be branded as foolishness. Loyalty also is never to something abstract, like the government, which is equated with impersonal law. Loyalty is to the Greek nation, to Greece, the mother of the people, to personified freedom, but not to "the Greeks" who are unknown. Profiteering and dealings on the black market were not considered bad, because they circumvented only impersonal law and showed disloyalty only to the government and to the unknown Greeks; actually they were good in terms of the family, to whom an individual owes his loyalty.

Responsibility is not social responsibility but family responsibility, or it might be extended to friends and to the village. With loyalty evoked only in personal relations, it follows that Greeks cannot be impartial in awarding jobs or distributing goods. To take care of one's own first, irrespective of merit or of an order of priority, is one's duty; it means fulfilling one's role. Yet impartiality, just because it is so difficult to maintain in the face of strong forces and temptations to "bend", and devotion to an abstract ideal of honesty, just because it is saintly, are highly admired in Greece—though perhaps not by the immediate relatives of the impartial man. Such people inspire what amounts to worship.

Co-operation in this framework is actually mutual aid, one person helping the other, or it is loyalty to the leader who initiates a co-operative undertaking, with men contributing their work for his sake, and women bringing gifts to him, which can be used incidentally for the undertaking.

Obedience is very important and is taught to a child almost from birth; but again, this is obedience within a structured whole, to the parents, older siblings, and to people who stand in this relationship; that is, to friends of the parents or of older relatives, or appropriately introduced older people. Authority comes only from place in this structured whole, and obedience is only to people. Government is not personal, and the law is external to the organic, structured whole. It is not the voice of Greece. There is therefore no obligation to obey the law; the guide to conduct here is expediency, and the ability to circumvent. Before the political centralization, there was obedience and lasting loyalty to the schoolteacher. Now he represents only the interfering authority of the government, and it is an accepted thing that the students should try to circumvent his authority in every way they can, playing tricks on him and otherwise treating him as an enemy, since he is outside of the web of their loyalties.

The framework of experience and the structuring of the thinking processes must also be known before change is acceptably suggested; at any rate, it must not be taken for granted that these are the same for the Greeks as they are for foreign experts. For example, a child care specialist in the United States is inveighing against the prevalence of bottle feeding when she urges mothers to suckle their babies, but to the Greeks, she is, naturally, inveighing against engaging a wet-nurse. 178

It is helpful also to know what can be discussed publicly, and printed in the newspaper, without offence. The government calls artificial insemination "artificial reproduction". An attempt by the writer to elicit information on the subject under the term "insemination" from recently and previously emigrated Greeks, met with failure since the women (coming from sections other than Athens and Salonica) had not heard of the programme, and were hesitant to mention it to their husbands; they obviously felt that the investigator, as a woman, could not approach the men with such questions. 178 203 831

There is a recognized variety among Greeks; and the differences are a matter of pride to them. They do not want to be treated as if they were all the same. There is also a difference in the attitude toward change. The intellectuals, the men high in the administration, do believe that the main part of the Greek population is backward, and are often ready for drastic and iconoclastic changes. For example, late in 1950, when Attica was suffering from drought, the government considered having the clouds seeded. But the peasants have always had a solution for drought: the priest and the villagers walk in a rain litany around the place. Different regions also vary in their acceptance of the new: the Greeks who came as refugees from the coastal areas of Asia Minor are, as a whole, more ready for the new; they are more enterprising, more ready to take a chance on the future. 178 184 [189]

One of the Greek attitudes deeply imbedded in their social structure is taken up here at greater length, since it is basic to many of the proposed changes; this is the phrasing of co-operative undertakings. 178 476

The suggestions for changes in agriculture, industrial developments, for the introduction of sanitary measures, demand co-operation and participation by the people concerned in bringing about these changes. The conception of co-operation as developed in the urban, scientific cultures of Europe and North America, is not usual in the rest of the world. This conception involves a collective working towards an impersonal, abstract end; the joining of a group created with a view towards a future end; and the ability to trust the other members of such a group to act according to abstract, impersonal honesty, as, for example, to act believing that the statistics others present are objectively sound, and are not coloured by personal considerations.

The traditional Greek pattern, however, is that individuals work not collectively but within an intricate web of interdependencies and

mutual aid. The abstract end, unless it is part of the immediate, concrete situation, and unless it is implemented in terms of persons, is meaningless; what is meaningful, for example, is for the family group to work together toward the continued education or the dowering of one of its members; or of to the village community rebuild its destroyed coffee house together. A leader who has won the respect of the community, consulting and guiding rather than commanding, can create a co-operative unit derivatively; he enlists the personal loyalty of the people; the people will work for his sake and, incidentally, for his idea and proposed end. This remains within the personal framework.

Again, Greeks are *born into a group*, and many Greeks, except under foreign influences in the city, never *join* a group. They are born into the family, into the circle of family friends, into the village community; they do not have to please in order to belong, or to follow regulations. If they fail in their roles within these units, they are bad sons but they do not lose their membership. Only if they forfeit their Greekness in some way, perhaps turn traitor or change their religion, do they run the risk of being disowned. These are the units of co-operation, but they are rooted in the past, not created. There is no Greek equivalent of the word "group" so common in the speech of Americans; words such as *omas* (mass) and *somateion* (body) are used technically to apply to organizations. In school, the class becomes a group only in its opposition to the enemy, the teacher, in playing cruel tricks involving co-operation; otherwise, what we find, even in this opposition, is cheating for the sake of a weaker student, or support of one student by another. There are individual friendships here, individual evocations of honesty. The American Farm School at Salonika works hard at making students realize that they actually form a community at the school, and at teaching them to co-operate within this framework; and the school reports that eventually the students do learn the new co-operative pattern.

Honesty exists, and is expected and respected, only where kinship and personal relations have been established, on a basis of trust and respect for personal worth. In American schools in the cities, American teachers have managed to convince the students that they can trust them as friends, and have thus changed the teacher-student relationship into one of co-operation and honesty. Foreign technical assistants have often lived in a world of their own, in foreign circles, and failing to establish personal relations, have evoked mistrust and dishonesty. Honesty toward fellow members in a created group can be achieved as the result of honesty and loyalty towards the leader of the group. However, it should not be taken for granted; neither should the Greeks be charged with dishonesty. Their framework of honesty is different from that known to the industrialized society of the United States and Western Europe.

There is at present a paradoxical situation in Greece. There is pride in the many co-operatives, spread throughout the country; there is delight on the part of some of the technical assistants because the groundwork for the introduction of necessary change is there, and there is dismay on the part of others that the Greeks do not know what co-operation means, that they have to be compelled to work for the benefit of the village, to be prevented from destroying its resources, and to be coerced to co-operate even in efforts for their own welfare. There is distress over the number of pressure groups created to get whatever they can from the government. All this is true. According to their own phrasing of co-operation and within the framework of the meaningful units, the Greeks were, and to some extent are now completely co-operative. Families and villages were responsible for their own indigent; a prominent peasant would impoverish himself to build a village school or improve the water system. They made their own decisions and carried them out; they chose their own leaders. The first co-operatives were started on local initiative in the last century. But later, the central government began to institute co-operatives on a foreign pattern, taking no account of the existing units of co-operation, or of the existing patterns of self-participation. The villages were not allowed a responsible role in creating the co-operatives—in fact, in co-operating. The state-financed Agricultural Bank has been in charge of creating local credit co-operatives but the peasants have felt that this was a government affair. Actually the rate, which was eight per cent at the time of the establishment of the bank in 1928, and is now as high as 18 per cent, with incidental fees, which peasants get from the bank through their credit co-operatives, does not seem to have been set with the welfare of the farmers in view, or according to their decision. In 1936, more than 3,000 of the 3,761 were credit co-operatives under the central supervision of the state. The others, such as the producers' co-operatives, were mainly compulsory. Such were the citrus growers' associations in Crete, the wine growers' association in Samos, Levkas, Attica, and Chalkis. There are now marketing co-operatives and machine-owning co-operatives, as well as a growing number of processing co-operatives. In general, the co-operatives are firmly controlled by the central government and the farmers are not even allowed to co-operate to the extent of electing their own officers. As a result, the attitude toward external authority has been evoked, and, in most cases, co-operation has to be compulsory as all government legislation has to be compulsory, and the so-called co-operative decisions are circumvented like all government decisions. Another attitude has also been evoked, particularly among those Greeks who welcomed the dictatorship; deprived of responsible decision and participation, these people fell into the pattern of accepted dependency; such people, unaware that they are "co-operating", say: "The government is

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taking good care of us." The government itself, aware of this shifting of responsibility and lack of participation, urges the people, in its organ, *The Battle for Survival*, to work for their own welfare and to turn to the State only for guidance, or when they can do no more for themselves. It tries to put this co-operation on a par with war, both in the title of its bi-weekly publication, and in the phrasing of its admonition. But the disrupting centralization, the hated interference, remains. "Compulsory free labour" is demanded of the farmers, and there is a whole class of compulsory co-operatives for the betterment of the villages. These are circumvented with the ingenuity born of long experience. However we also have a recent report of a village where everyone gets up when the church bell rings at four in the morning, to work, without compulsion, on some village project, with pride and enthusiasm. The work is done under the leadership of a villager respected for his ability and disinterestedness. It appears that when the co-operative pattern which is already present is utilized, the villagers will work together for the common welfare.

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